



NATIONAL WEATHER
SERVICE -
SEATTLE/TACOMA

SKYWARN® Spotter News

www.weather.gov/seattle

FALL 2013

Fall is Here - Are You Ready?

After a dry, warm summer, the days are getting shorter and the nights longer. Fall has arrived, winter is coming, and our storm season is here.

October marks the start of our wind storm season and runs through early March. Our flood season usually begins in November and runs through February. The middle of November is when our lowland snow season can begin and extends into early March.

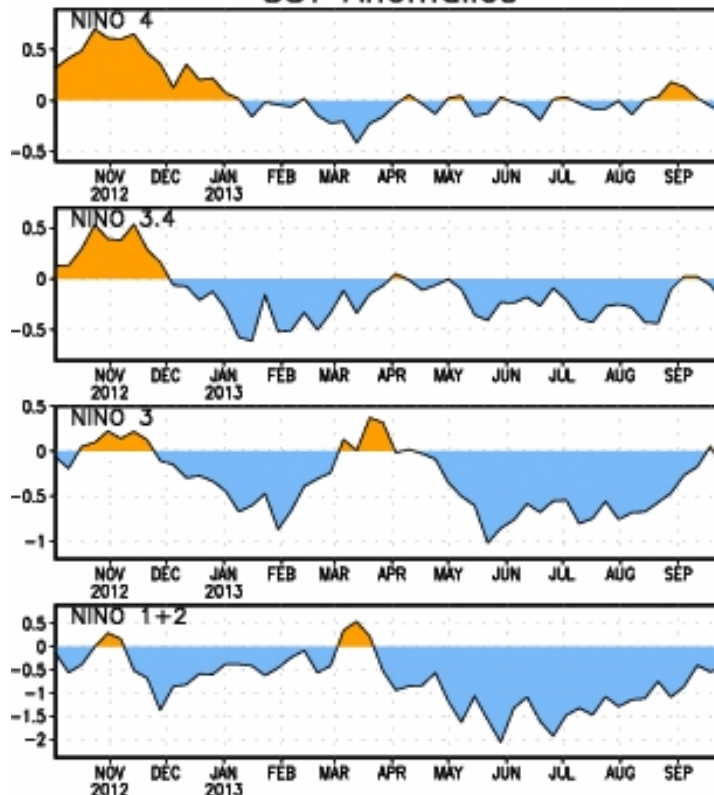
So what does this winter season have in store? Sea surface temperatures in the equatorial waters of the eastern and central Pacific Ocean are hovering around average, meaning 'neutral' conditions will again be in place this winter season. So no El Nino or La Nina, but neutral conditions. Neutral usually brings active weather to our area. It is number one for atmospheric river or aka – Pineapple Express events vs El Nino or La Nina. It is number two for frequency of strong damaging wind storms and lowland snow events. We had neutral conditions last winter and it was a relatively quiet season. It is doubtful we will dodge the bullet again this winter!

...cont page 4

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Fall season	1
Spotter Training	2
Weather Radio	3
Trivia	5
SKYWARN Recognition Day	6
CoCoRaHS	7

SST Anomalies



Sea surface temperature anomalies show we are hovering around normal or neutral conditions.

www.cpc.noaa.gov



**Spotter
Training
coming to
Whatcom,
San Juan,
Island, King
and Pierce
counties**

Spotter Training Update

Spotter Training- Spotter training sessions are planned this fall for Whatcom, San Juan, Island, King, and Pierce counties. For training announcements with specific dates and locations near you, visit our web site headlines at www.weather.gov/seattle/ or watch your mailbox for announcements. The training helps new and veteran spotters, including interested citizens, amateur radio and law enforcement personnel. If you want to attend one of these sessions, please see the announcements and RSVP with your local emergency management staff. We look forward to seeing you at a training session near you!

Government Shutdown - As of October 3rd the government remains in a partial shutdown. At the National Weather Service we are considered “essential service” and are “excepted” from the shutdown. Unfortunately, the shutdown means there is no funding authorization for our operations. Our job will focus purely on our primary mission of helping save lives and property, and enhancing the economy. With no funding, we cannot travel, attend meetings or conferences, or even host such meetings. The shutdown may jeopardize spotter training events. Our web site and other decision support resources will continue to operate normally.

We May Contact You – We are building a means to send email spotter activation notifications. During our late summer thunderstorm events, you may have seen these notification emails. This process is another way to raise your awareness to keep your eye to the sky and report any spotter criteria weather events such as strong damaging winds and snowfall. For this process to work well, it is important that we have your current email address. Contact Jay Neher at jay.neher@noaa.gov if you have a new email address or wish to ensure we have your current email address.

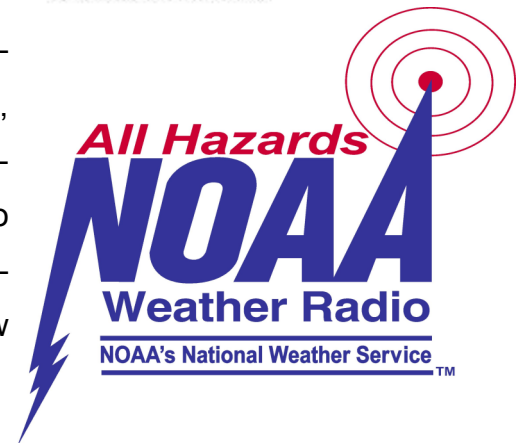
October is Weather Radio Awareness Month in Washington

Governor Jay Inslee has proclaimed October as Weather Radio Awareness Month as well as All-Hazards Preparedness Month in Washington. The campaign goal is to have weather radios become as common as smoke detectors in homes and businesses.

Direct from the National Weather Service, NOAA Weather Radio helps protect lives and property via its warning alarm feature, and site specific and event select capabilities. However, many people are not aware of this cost effective life saving service or use it. Winter is just around the corner. A weather radio is an important preparedness tool in your home and car preparedness kits before the wind blows, the rivers rise or the snow flies!

Weather Radio is your personal all-hazards warning system and serves as Washington's "all-hazards" warning system, including tsunamis, volcanoes and hazardous releases. For more information and retailer discounts, visit the Washington State Emergency Management campaign host web site at www.emd.wa.gov.

In addition, as a part of the Weather Radio Month, NWS forecast offices across the state will be activating the Emergency Alert System (EAS) for the Required Monthly Test (RMT) on October 17th at close to 10:17 AM to initiate the statewide 'drop, cover and hold' earthquake drill and annual tsunami warning communications test (for the outer coast). Your weather radio should activate for this drill and broadcasters will carry the test on air, all part of the west coast Great Shakeout. To register for the Great Shakeout, visit <http://shakeout.org/washington/> and join the fun!



**ENSO-
Neutral
conditions
are forecast
this winter**

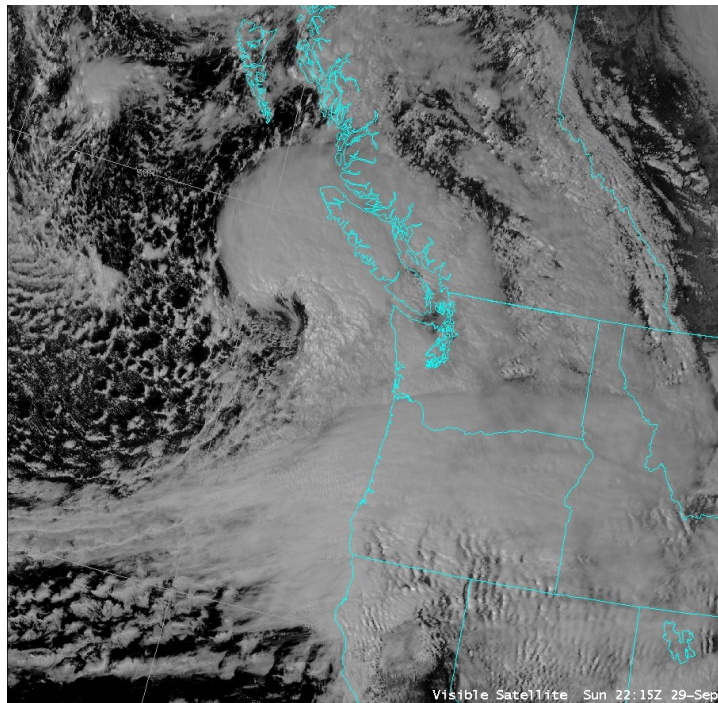
Fall cont...

As a Skywarn weather spotter, are you ready? Now is the time to prepare your home and business, and brush up on your winter weather reporting criteria. Ensure your rain gauge is clean, free of obstructions like trees and structures. Is your anemometer in good operating order? If you do not have an anemometer, have your Beaufort scale handy. In addition, ensure your snow boards and marking flags are ready to be placed in an unobstructed location, usually near your rain gauge.

When prepared, you'll be ready to report any heavy rainfall amounts, strong winds and snow amounts. To top it off, fall is our secondary maximum for thunderstorms during the year.

For the latest seasonal weather outlooks from the National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center, visit their web site at www.cpc.noaa.gov.

Have a safe winter and we look forward to your weather spotter reports this season.



The visible satellite image shows a spiraling surface low offshore, September 29, 2013. This system brought heavy rain and strong winds to the region.

First Freeze Trivia

Here is an interesting puzzle for you to solve. Match the average first day of 32 degrees or colder with these western Washington locations. The answers will appear elsewhere in Skywarn Spotter News.

Average First Freeze Date

Forks	Oct 30
Paradise Ranger Station	Oct 26
Bellingham	Aug 28
Olympia	Oct 23
Sea-Tac Airport	Nov 9
Coupeville	Oct 7



A frosty log on the NOAA Sandpoint campus in North Seattle, December 2005.

New On-line Spotter Reporting Page

This just in! There is a new on-line weather spotter reporting page. It is simply called SR Reporting or Storm Reporting. Visit www.srh.noaa.gov/StormReport/SubmitReport.php?site=sew to view this new spotter reporting tool. It is easy to use – clean and logically-designed. Put your spotter number in the comments section and use NWS Storm Spotter in the Observer Profile.

We strongly encourage you to call us with your spotter reports since it provides the opportunity to exchange information and ask questions for a more complete report. Yet if you are unable to call with your current or delayed spotter report, you have SR Reporting as another option.

WANTED: SPOTTER REPORTS

Many spotters feel their reports may not be important or needed. Oh, contraire!! If you are experiencing strong winds, accumulating snow, or any other spotter report criteria, contact us! These event-driven reports help support warning messages in effect, are reported by area press, help emergency management officials better determine where to deploy their limited resources, encourage people to take action to stay out of harm's way, and verify our warnings. So, don't be shy to contact us when needed !!

This year's Skywarn Recognition Day is slated for December 7th - mark your calendar! www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/hamradio/



ARRL
The national association for
AMATEUR RADIO



Time to Clean Your Rain Gauge!

Each rain droplet from this past rainy season has a microscopic dust or dirt nucleus. After a period of time, the microscopic nuclei collection looks like a bathtub ring near the bottom of the gauge. It only takes a few minutes to clean the gauge and helps produce more accurate precipitation measurements.

Pour some bleach and hot water into the gauge or measuring tube. Allow it to sit for a while, then rinse it with hot water. That's all there is to it! If the sediment and green "stuff" persists, it may take a few more rounds of soaking and cleaning.

Another cleaning alternative is to use denture cleaning tablets and warm water. Soak for a few hours, rinse out, and it will look practically brand new and ready for this winter!



CoCoRaHS Update

October 1st marked the start of our water year as well as our wet season across western Washington. But we had a very wet September as well - including two, big one-day totals across the area (Sept 5 and 28). Your CoCoRaHS rainfall reports are critical to us at the National Weather Service during these big events. It shows us just how dramatic the rainfall totals can vary from place to place.

CoCoRaHS began in Colorado after a devastating flood in 1998. The State Climatologist found that the heavy rain missed the official gauges during this event and there was a need to increase the density of precipitation measurements. Since then, CoCoRaHS has spread across all of the U.S. and Canada. Washington state joined CoCoRaHS in June of 2008. If you haven't done so already, please check out www.cocorahs.org for more information about the CoCoRaHS program. There's no limit to the number of observers, so join today!



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Climate Newsletter

The Office of the Washington State Climatologist produces a monthly weather summary that is available online or by email. Check out the summer review. To view OWSC's latest newsletter please visit:

www.climate.washington.edu/newsletter

Feedback!

Your feedback is wanted! Please let us know ...

What would you like to see in future Skywarn newsletters?
Additional spotter training?
CoCoRaHS training?

Comments or questions?

Contact jeff.michalski@noaa.gov

Trivia Question Answers

Average first freeze dates

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